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Division of Labor Among Microscopists.

BY PROF. J. M. MANSFIELD, Green Castle, Ind.

There is now no systematic, conscious oversight in the multitude of researches in microscopy. Each man, moved by the impulse of discovery, pushes out in whatever direction his immediate surroundings or accident may suggest. He could often just as easily think in some other department of the subject. One way to account for the great number of scientific papers in Germany is that young Germans are taught in the universities to look about for some unexplored thought and work it as exhaustively as possible for publication. And while German microscopists are not organized for the systematic movement meant in this paper, yet they do the next thing to it—that is, push out and work out some department of thought, though it is done without oversight. Now, what we want, in the whole domain of microscopy, is that same oversight in all the work that a great business manufacturer has over each man in his employment. If he has a thousand hands, each one has his work assigned him. I think if each hand should go, without the guiding reason of the controlling mind, and find by accident his work, or turn to whatever happened to be near him, it would be something like the present state of our science. Some of the hands would by their very genius do good work in such bad government, but the most of them would neither find their places, nor work enough to bring up their part of the manufacturing, and hence the work as a whole would suffer irrevocable loss.

The short of this matter is, we must remember Bacon's urgent directions for division of labor, which necessitates a committee to divide up the whole science and its applications, choose men

for each party, and as there are not enough living microscopists to take all the pieces, as mountains of microscopic truth will be untouched after every living microscopist has added his wreath to the science, they can look about for young people and others who will come and labor in this field. The new microscopists coming to work will gladly prepare for the subject which the committee of oversight has assigned them. Thousands of men will go at once to assigned work who will never go if left to themselves. It is difficult for one just beginning a science to know what to do, or what parts are already worked up. Many away from good microscopic libraries of reference can not know what is now well done, and will not undertake a research which they think may be already done. Under this plan of conscious oversight one starting could be easily informed by letter from the committee what his part is, and be advised, if a new hand, of methods, works of reference, and other persons who could work with him; also the character of the publication, such as abundant illustrations, giving all the species in systematic botany, zoölogy, and mineralogy, photographs of drawings, colored or not, whatever is best; so in histology, and all branches of the subject. By an organized effort much could be done to lay down general methods of work to which all ought to attain. There is nothing in this to take any man from his present delightful study, but at once, all along the line, systematize the work to conquer the world. If some man is a genius called to a special work, and can not work in other fields, either from his nature or surroundings, let him push up a round higher, if he can, to what his heart and mind cling to. No one need close his eye to some other's truth. If such a union of work be undertaken by this society, in ten years it will have more effective systematic works than all the world of microscopists beside them. Vast volumes telling everything that can be known are needed now by so many studying in private. They are a necessity in laboratories. These volumes ought to be written from a great variety of stand-points. They must be written to economize the labor of teachers and students. It is now well established that the advancement of such a science as microscopy must be pushed forward by experiment in the progress of the world. And this society knows the same is true of each individual who seeks entrance at these beautiful gates

of this infinite, varied and sublime panorama of microscopic truth. To give the student the best results he ought to have these exhaustive guide-books in his delightful journey. For every thing on this planet must pass in the microscopist's field of view.